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THE THEME AND VARIATIONS AS USED BY FOUR IMPORTANT
PIANO COMPOSERS IN FOUR PERIODS OF MUSIC HISTORY

A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate Faculty
Central Washington State College

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Education

by
James Patrick O'Brien
August 1966

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CENTRAL WASHINGTON STATE COLLEGE
DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

GRADUATE RECITAL (Tape recorded)

JAMES O'BRIEN, Piano

PROGRAM

I

Organ Prelude in G Minor Bach-Siloti

Suite V in E Major Handel
Air and Doubles

Piano Sonata in A major, K.331 Mozart
Theme and Variations

II

"Italian" Concerto Bach
Allegro
Andante
Presto

INTERMISSION

III

Piano Sonata in A flat Major, opus 26 Beethoven
Andante con Variazioni

Piano Sonata No. 3 Dello Joio
Tema and Variations ..
Presto e leggiero
Allegro vivo e ritmico

HERTZ RECITAL HALL
July 31, 1966
8:15 P.M.

APPROVED FOR THE GRADUATE FACULTY

Herbert A. Bird, COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Wayne S. Hertz

Dean Stinson

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

The use of the technique of "theme and variations" has been in the composing repertoire of musicians from the Renaissance to the Modern Period, although never of prime concern in any one era. The form, or technique, has been a favorite of many composers, each of whom has employed it somewhat differently; at the same time the form has been adapted to the style of each period. In other words, the form has revealed itself in different usages at different times.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. The intent of this study was to give a brief background and history of the theme and variations in early periods of music history, as well as to analyze more specifically and compare in some depth the use of the form by four composers of later periods, in a keyboard work of each. Each of the following composers represents a different period of music history: (1) Handel, late Baroque; (2) Mozart, Classic; (3) Beethoven, early Romantic; and (4) Norman Dello Joio, Modern. Although the form under study has been used in many media of writing, the compositions in this analysis are limited to piano

works. There is no inclusion of symphonic, chamber, or vocal variations, nor of works that combine the piano and an orchestra.

Importance of the study. Because the form "theme and variations" has been a stock device to be treated by composers of every period, it behooves any musician, whether his primary interest is in composition or in appreciation of the thread of continuity in music history, to examine critically this technique. "It has been the medium for some of the most trivial human expression and some of the deepest." (16:336) It is a form which is still strongly with us, and an understanding of it can help one see the countless possibilities of which it is capable, as well as its universal appeal to composer and listener throughout music history.

Of all existing forms there is none which shows such infinite diversity as (from its very nature) does the variation form. It has therefore been impossible to deal with it exhaustively. (15:106)

II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Variation. This term is defined by Prout in Applied Forms (15:85). "By the word 'Variation' in its musical sense is meant the presentation of the same thought, or series of thoughts, under different aspects." Generally, this is thought of as an Air with variations, which may be

either an independent work or a part (i.e. movement) of a larger work (15:91). Sometimes, a variation will be only a device or technique within a larger composition, used to prolong or to add interest. Besides a tune or air, variation may be a bass, a harmonic progression, a rhythmic pattern or have polyphonic texture (4:670). Within this study, however, the definition will be limited to variations which constitute a theme (air) and variations, composed primarily as a movement within a larger work, either a sonata or a suite.

Ornamental variation. This type retains the melody with its underlying harmonic structure, but achieves variation by decorating the tune, specifically, with ornaments such as mordents, trills, and various other non-harmonic tones. Ornamental variation generally aims for brilliance and virtuosity (10:95).

Characteristic variation. This type involves theme transformation and metamorphosis, changing and altering both melody and harmony, but always maintaining a degree of contact with the theme through some component, such as the rhythm. The modern composers, as well as many of the Romantics, cultivated the variation technique in this sense (10:95). Sometimes this type of variation is termed eccentric, while the ornamental type is labeled concentric.

The concentric would seem to imply a well defined center or theme around which all the variations revolve, never failing to relate to that center, whereas, the eccentric would seem to suggest an occasional shifting from the axis of theme, from variations which can be closely associated with the theme to those whose relation is subtle.

These last two ideas are sometimes classified into slightly different terms by other analysts. Because the former terms will be used concurrently in this paper with those which follow, it will be well to cite other names for the same two categories, such as those given by Murphy (13:55).

Small variation. This type is characterized by a short, well-punctuated theme, with distinct variations which are equally as well punctuated. The form of the theme is generally symmetrical. The Classicists employed it most notably.

Large variation. This type has an extended theme in which the cadences are not easily recognizable. There is a comprehensive and subtle treatment in the variations, with few normal punctuations and breaks, but, rather, with continuous movement, as in a fantasy. The Romantics, the post-Romantics, and the contemporary composers are more closely identified with this type.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

I. BRIEF HISTORY OF THE FORM

The principle of variation in music goes back to the time when music was largely vocal, i.e. the chants of the Middle Ages, according to some experts (18:1955). In the era when organum was used extensively, variation was employed in music to make a larger work and to relieve monotony. Morris (12:69) supports this opinion in saying that the contrapuntal devices placed over a plain-song (or a secular song) constituted a type of variation, because the decoration, which preserved the melodic intervals, existed over a melody of long notes, the tenor. The rhythm of the decoration was, of necessity, altered. Leichtentritt (10:96) traces the variation technique back to the Gregorian chant and to the polyphonic music of the Dutch and Italian composers. The secular influence undoubtedly contributed something to variations, in the speculation that folk singers, the troubadours and trouveres, undoubtedly embellished their tunes with turns and mordents (2:46); dance music is also believed to have been a source (6:103).

Whereas the above examples apply more to a technique of variation employed haphazardly and indiscriminately, the

use of variation as a form is generally attributed to the English virginal composers, such as Byrd, Bull, and Farnaby (12:70). Actually, the variation form is seen to exist in Spain in the early 16th Century (18:1955). The technique had arisen from vihuela accompaniments for vocalists. The instrumental accompaniment of strophic songs of the period became too monotonous if it was not varied, so generally, two versions of the accompaniment were used, one simple and one florid, while the vocal line remained the same at all times (21:693). It was an easy step from this to independent variations in which an attempt was made to evolve an idiomatic instrumental style, separate from vocal music. Instrumental music could be extended because variations upon the tune provided a convenient unity of structure. These early repetitions, often upon simple dance tunes, amounted to runs, grace notes, and similar ornaments, all variations of an ornamental type, but none-the-less, variations (11:178). In fact, the keyboard variations of the period often involved no more than moving the theme from the soprano to a lower voice (9:205). Proponents of the variation form in Spain in the 16th Century were notably Antonio de Cabezon (1510-66), termed the Spanish Bach, Alonso de Mudarra, Enriquez de Valderrabano, Diego Pisador, Miguel de Fuenllana, and Venegas de Henestrosa (18:1955).

The English virginal school was influenced by the Spanish variationists. Intercourse between the two countries existed, and it is known that Cabezon and others accompanied Philip II (1556-98) to England in the middle of the 16th Century (18:1955). Spain also influenced Majone and Trabaci in Italy as well as Sweelinck in the North.

The peak of English variation technique was in the early 17th Century, as is witnessed by the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book of 1625 (10:96). These variations, again largely ornamental, included bass and counter-melody types. It is said that these variations were more on a texture than upon a single tune (1:22). For example, the Byrd variations, in which the emphasis was more upon the texture than upon the tune, concentrated most definitely upon the harmonic framework. Stock devices for melodic decoration were scales and arpeggios, which increased in complexity, rapidity, and virtuosity as the work progressed (12:70). Too, variations were frequently paired, such as utilizing a sixteenth note figure in the right hand in one variation, then passing the figure to the left hand in the subsequent one; sometimes the drive to complexity was momentarily interrupted by a slower variation (9:260). It shall be seen later that Handel was one of the heirs of this school.

The development of the ground bass was largely an English idea; the theme was a harmonic structure over which

decorations and embellishments were superimposed. The Passacaglia, which kept the harmonic structure below, and the Chaconne, which allowed the structure to wander to the upper voices, were outgrowths of this concentration upon bass variation and texture (18:1955). This type of variation generally reigned supreme during the 150 years of the Baroque era (12:70). During this period, much material for variation was derived from popular or dance tunes. These were later expanded into the dance suites.

It is seen that the variation derives from the very early days of instrumental music, and can be traced back to the chants of the Middle Ages; it still holds its own, as it did during the Classic and Romantic periods. This reason is not hard to find, for this form allows great freedom for the "...play of the composer's imagination and powers of development." (2:50) This study will now examine some of these techniques which have and continue to arouse composers imaginations.

II. TECHNIQUE OF VARIATION

Various standard authorities on musical form give different interpretations as to how a theme may be varied. It is important to state these because from them a consensus of the types of techniques can be seen.

Macpherson (11:184) identifies the following types of variations:

(1) The melodic type, in which the harmony remains unchanged in each successive variation while the melody is decorated with various non-harmonic tones. This type, earlier defined as the ornamental type, utilizes runs, trills, arpeggios, and register changes to embellish the melody. The variations within the "Air and Doubles" of the 17th and 18th Centuries employed this type; the type also prevailed well into the 19th Century. It is interesting that in the time of Herz (1803-88), Hunten, and Kalkbrenner (1785-1849), this type of variation was commonly referred to as "cheap variations" because it could "...easily degenerate into a shallow play of sounds, into brilliant virtuoso pyrotechnics without musical substance." (10:97)

(2) The harmonic type, in which the melody is kept intact while the harmonization is altered. Bach used this technique in some of his chorales, such as in his harmonizations of O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden, chorales #74, 80, and 89 (Examples in Figs. 1, 2, and 3). Bartok, too, was fond of this device, as is shown in the two harmonizations within the simple piece, Hungarian Play Tune (Figs. 4 and 5). Often, as is evident in these Bach chorales, the logic of the harmony prevents one from aurally perceiving the

music as a variation; each seems to be an entity because of its innate logic.



FIGURE 1

O HAUPT VOLL BLUT UND WUNDEN
EXCERPT OF CHORALE #74
 BACH



FIGURE 2

O HAUPT VOLL BLUT UND WUNDEN
EXCERPT OF CHORALE #80
 BACH

(3) Another melodic type, in which the harmonic structure is kept intact while the melody is completely changed. This type is just the reciprocal of that mentioned

above, but, again, the logic of the melody makes this a difficult technique to actually recognize as a variation.



FIGURE 3

O HAUPT VOLL BLUT UND WUNDEN
EXCERPT OF CHORALE #89
 BACH



FIGURE 4

HUNGARIAN PLAY TUNE
EXCERPT
 BARTOK

(4) A character variation, in which the main features of both the harmony and melody are retained, but in which there is a change in "character" of the theme through tempo

and rhythmic alterations. The 19th Century composers were fond of this type because it had so much dramatic potential.



FIGURE 5

HUNGARIAN PLAY TUNE
EXCERPT
BARTOK

Beethoven, in his Diabelli variations, used waltzes, marches, and various thematic developments to elaborate upon his theme (14:5). This type, also termed "large" seldom appeared in music before Beethoven, because he really capitalized on it and showed its infinite possibilities. This does not mean that earlier composers had not been aware of the type. Alessandro Poglietti (d. 1683), a Viennese court cembalist, presented his empress with a birthday composition, a set of variations, in which the nations of the Austrian empire passed in review--Bohemian bagpipe, Dutch flageolet, Polish "Sablschertz," Bavarian Schalmei, and a Hungarian violin rhapsody (10:97). He, however, was an exception for his day, and this lone case

of characteristic variations was not pursued by his contemporaries. Included within characteristic variations must be mentioned that this type may involve changing the theme from an upper voice to the bass, changing registers, contrasting legato and staccato styles, forte and piano dynamics, or sonorous versus thin textures.

(5) An entire departure, in which there is a complete turn from the original sentiment of the theme; the unity is provided by the rhythm. Contemporary composers prefer this type, which often involves only the variation of a motive of the theme or the fragmentation of a rhythm. The result is truly a free development along rhapsodic or fantasia lines (14:6). This type is the most esoteric, for the connecting link need only be in the composer's mind (21:694). The variations may be only superficially linked with the original theme.

(6) Contrapuntal variations, which employ canonic or fugal treatment. This type appeared in much of the 17th Century organ music, sometimes as a variation on a cantus firmus or upon a chorale, resulting in a chorale prelude utilizing ostinato sequences, Stimmtausch, or imitation. This type is not often considered a form, but rather as a device used in fugues or fugatos, chaconnes, or passacaglias. Bach's Art of the Fugue (10:97) has many examples of this type.

III. RELATED CLASSIFICATIONS OF VARIATION

Although a list of assorted classifications of variations by other theorists may seem redundant, it is of necessity included in an adequate review of related literature.

Prout in Applied Forms (15:105) characterizes variations according to those which: (1) are mere ornamentation of melody, with profuse use of auxiliary and passing tones, arpeggios, etc; (2) involve harmonic change; and (3) have a change of mode or rhythmic figuration. Morris' classification is similar (12:72-73):

- (1) Tune may be transferred to another part.
- (2) Tune may be retained, but the harmonies become richer or are varied.
- (3) Preservation of melodic outlines, but with altered rhythm, resulting in a greatly elaborated texture.
- (4) Melody presented in decorative guise.
- (5) Weaving of characteristic fragments of the melody or rhythm.
- (6) Fugal treatment of a prominent series of notes.
- (7) Canonic treatment.
- (8) Double counterpoint or melodic inversion.
- (9) Development of a unit or a rhythmic figure.
- (10) Introduction of independent figures which really have no traceable relationship to the main theme.

All of the techniques cited above may be utilized within a set of variations. Each composer within each period has utilized one or more of these elements specifically in his works. It is to the examination of specific examples that this study now turns.

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS OF SPECIFIC VARIATIONS

For this study, four sets of variations, each representing a different period and thus a different technique have been chosen for analysis. These are: Handel's Air and Doubles from Suite V in E major; Mozart's Variations from the Piano Sonata in A major (K. 331); Beethoven's Andante con Variazioni from his piano sonata in Ab major, opus 26; and Norman Dello Joio's Theme and Variations from his 3rd Piano Sonata. All of these are keyboard variations, written as a movement of a sonata, with the exception of the Handel-ian set, which is from a suite.

I. HANDEL

The variations within the instrumental suites of Handel's time were generally referred to as Doubles, and they represent a type in which the harmony remains basically the same throughout, and in which interest is maintained by decorating the melody with arpeggios or runs, ever increasing in complexity (11:181). The effect of the variations is one of simplicity running to complexity, although this was sometimes reversed, with the complexity coming at the beginning of the doubles and gradually unfolding and unraveling to a simple air at the end of the set (20:240). The type may be

considered either ornamental or small. It is obvious, because only the melody is altered, that the theme is seldom revealed in a truly new light (1:242); rather, it is clothed in a more elaborate garment. In this sense, the variations are considered by some (4:677) to be more of an Italian nature, but by others, to depend for effectiveness "...upon the cumulative impression of the whole..." rather than upon the theme or any one of the variations (18:1955).

The Air and Five Doubles by Handel in his E major Suite for piano has often been referred to as the "Harmonious Blacksmith," a title not dubbed by Handel. The source of the theme is not exactly known; authorities claim it came from a French song, Plus Ne Suis, of this era, but the source has proven spurious because the song did not appear until 1765. A professor of the University of Vienna, Dr. Guido Adler, has surmised that Handel borrowed the theme from Georg Christoph Wagenseil (1715-77), which does not really pinpoint its origin, but at least fixes Handel's source (7:12).

The theme (Fig. 6) has a melody written in eighth notes, which is quite compatible with the underlying harmony. The harmony, beginning and remaining on I of E major until the half cadence of V, is relatively simple. The complete theme consists of eight measures, and the harmony remains I, never convincingly moving to IV or V, except in a transitory manner. The theme may be thought of as one

prolongation of the I chord; the melody certainly supports this idea, because it is largely centered around an "e" in the treble.

The musical score consists of three systems, each with a treble and bass staff. The key signature is E major (three sharps) and the time signature is common time (C). Roman numeral chord figures are provided below the bass staff of each system.

System 1 Chord Figures: E: I VI^b V I VI^b I III VI^b $\frac{V}{VI}$ V

System 2 Chord Figures: I^b I IV I^b I IV I^b I I^b IV I^b V^b I

System 3 Chord Figures: V I^b II^b I^b I^b II^b I^b I^b V^b I I^b V^b I

FIGURE 6

THEME OF VARIATIONS IN E MAJOR
HANDEL

The first Double maintains identical harmony and cadences. The only difference is in the melody, which now

involves sixteenth notes, interpolated as extra notes, similar to a pedal, between the original notes. The left hand remains basically the same, although there is now a hint of a countermelody (Fig. 7).



FIGURE 7

DOUBLE ONE OF E MAJOR VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
HANDEL

The second Double passes the sixteenth note action to the left hand in the form of an Alberti bass, with the theme hidden in the alto part of the right hand until the half cadence, at which time it passes back to the soprano (Fig. 8). Doubles One and Two actually complement one another, each having been written in sixteenth notes, with the activity of the first in the right hand, followed by a parallel activity in the left hand of the second. One has little meaning without the other. This pairing of Doubles was a legacy of the Virginal School of Byrd (9:260).

Pairing is also evident in Doubles Three and Four. The motion has been accelerated to that of triplet sixteenth

notes (Fig. 9), first in the right hand in Three, and passing to the left hand in Four (Fig. 10). As in Double Two, Four has the theme hidden in the alto voice until the half cadence.



FIGURE 8

DOUBLE TWO OF E MAJOR VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
HANDEL



FIGURE 9

DOUBLE THREE OF E MAJOR VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
HANDEL

The final Double has no complement, but rather, divides the thirty-second note activity equally between the

right and left hands (Fig. 11). The harmony remains I throughout, with the exception of resting temporarily on V at the half-cadence, and is reinforced by scale-like passages of E major. Throughout this set, the harmony has retained the feeling of E major, and the motion has been one of increasing complexity, culminating in this tempestuous variation. The mood never changes; activity never ceases. In summary, the theme and the ornamentation thereof are all pervading. The success here depends upon the total effect rather than upon any single variation.



FIGURE 10

DOUBLE FOUR OF E MAJOR VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
HANDEL

III. MOZART

Mozart, who composed many sets of variations, both as entities and as a movement within a larger work, regarded variations as unimportant (18:1956). Tovey considers Mozart's

variations in sonatas much higher in caliber than those perfunctory variations which were composed as entities in themselves and used mostly for encores to dazzle concert patrons (20:241).

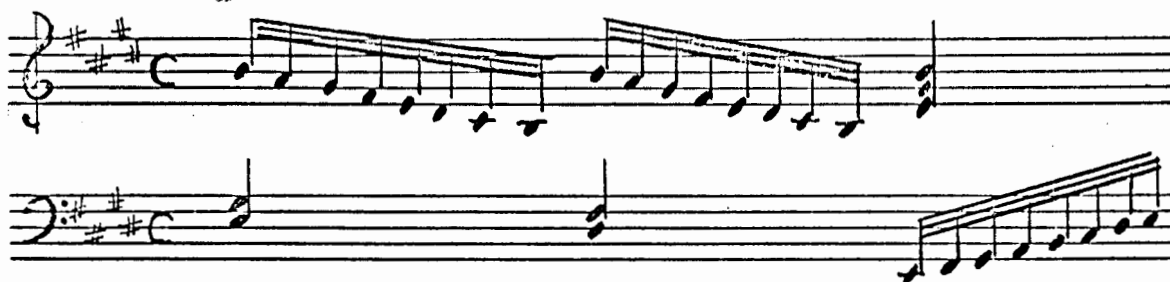


FIGURE 11

DOUBLE FIVE OF E MAJOR VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
HANDEL

The classical composers treated variations in clichés, as they did other elements within their music, such as the cadences and chord progressions; although Mozart did this, his treatment of the clichés was fuller in substance and variety, and he is generally considered great because he did add originality and grace to an age which preferred the established pattern. The formula for variations, not unlike Handel's, usually involved an increase in the speed of motion, such as quarter notes passing to eighths as the variations progressed, but with an abrupt change to the other extreme somewhere in the middle of the set, by the advent of

a slow variation, which was in turn followed by more animated ones (10:104). The theme was all important, the cadences were well defined, and the harmony was stable. Decoration was the main device of variation, or as Morris states (12:75):

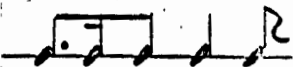
...the great classical composers adhere pretty closely to bar structure of their theme, but allow themselves a certain license in the matter of harmonic detail, especially in the later variations, when the main outlines of the theme have had time to impress themselves firmly on the listener's mind.

Needless to say, many trite variations were written in Mozart's day, which have henceforth passed into oblivion. These displayed fiery scale passages and rippling arpeggios, but lacked any substance, such as a meaningful tune, to embroider with such pyrotechnics. The greater men, like Haydn and Mozart, were able to choose a nice tune and then intellectually and subtly transform it into a meaningful piece of art music (11:182).

Mozart's variations, in true spirit of the Style Galant, follow a scheme, outlined by Macpherson (11:182). The early variations follow the theme closely; then, there is usually a change to the parallel minor, or to major if the theme is minor, somewhere in the middle of the set. One of the later variations will have a codetta or unbarred cadenza, followed by a final variation in which the original theme is presented in a different meter. If the tune is in

4/4, the last variation will be in 6/8 or 2/4. Grove's Dictionary (4:681) describes a similar pattern in Mozart's variations, mentioning also that the melodic type outnumber the harmonic four to one.

Mozart's theme in the A major variations has considerable charm of itself. Typically classic, in AABA form, it is separated into four measure phrases. The first four measures end in a half cadence (E-7th chord) and the second four cadence in the tonic A major. The melody, in 6/8 time, in the first eight measures, centers mainly around a prolonged third of the tonic chord, c-sharp, touching upon a neighboring note "b" sequentially in the second measure, but not actually moving to "a" until the cadence in measure eight (Fig. 12). The bass provides parallel harmony at an interval of the tenth. The next four measures, of contrasting material, may be thought of as a B portion, form-wise, moving to the subdominant pole momentarily, but reaching a cadence with E-7th in measure twelve. The following four measures constitute a return to the A portion of theme, but the advent of two extra measures (a total of eighteen) delays the cadence from where it is expected in measure sixteen, by a double appoggiatura (Fig. 13) which resolves upward on a weak beat, thus hardly creating a strong cadential feeling until measure eighteen. The theme is united

rhythmically by the  rhythmic figure, and its harmonic and phrase structure serve all the variations except the final, number VI.

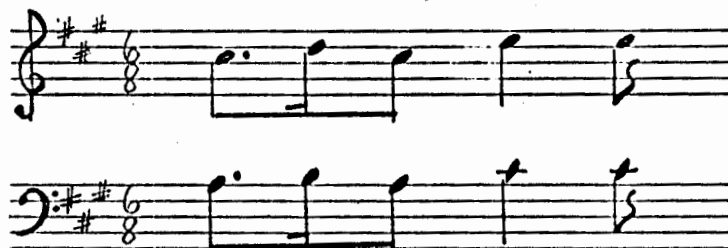


FIGURE 12

THEME OF A MAJOR VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
MOZART



FIGURE 13

EXAMPLE OF A DOUBLE APPOGGIATURA
A MAJOR VARIATIONS
MOZART

The first variation, also in 6/8, retains the major key, the harmony and the phrases. The variation is actually a very clever embroidering of the theme, with the use of appoggiaturas, auxiliaries, and passing tones (Fig. 14).

The bass is simplified to an offbeat accompaniment, or to octave jumps (Fig. 15). As in the theme, the unifying element is a rhythmic figure, shown in Fig. 14.



FIGURE 14

VARIATION ONE OF A MAJOR VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
MOZART



FIGURE 15

VARIATION ONE OF A MAJOR VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
MOZART

The second and fourth variations are considered to be the most pianistic in this set (5:267). The second preserves the melody intact with some decoration in the form of trills (Fig. 16). The change of feeling can be attributed to the

triplet figure, actually an Alberti bass (Fig. 17), which gives this variation its pianistic and busy feeling. Like the first variation, II retains the basic harmony, the AABA form, and the delayed cadence two measures from the end.



FIGURE 16

VARIATION TWO OF A MAJOR VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
MOZART



FIGURE 17

VARIATION TWO OF A MAJOR VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
MOZART

The third variation makes an abrupt change to A minor, to be played in a slower tempo, but it preserves the I to V relationship; there is a feeling of improvisation, around a "c" natural, first in single notes, and then in octaves in the repeat of the A phrase (Figs. 18 and 19, respectively).

The octaves provide a very glossy effect. The B section resembles the B section of the theme, generally centering around the same notes, and largely preserving the improvisatory quality. The return to A is in single notes, immediately followed by octaves.

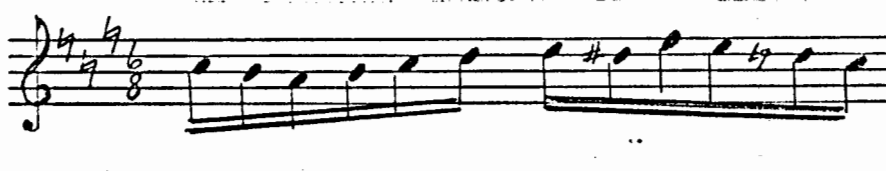


FIGURE 18

VARIATION THREE OF A MAJOR VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
MOZART



FIGURE 19

VARIATION THREE OF A MAJOR VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
MOZART

The fourth variation, the most pianistic, explores the extremes of the keyboard. The return to A major is accompanied by the superposition of the melody above the treble staff (Fig. 20). A bass note serves to give a sure

foundation to the ever stable harmony. This contrast of the low and high registers seems to foreshadow the later endeavors of Beethoven, and more particularly, of Chopin.



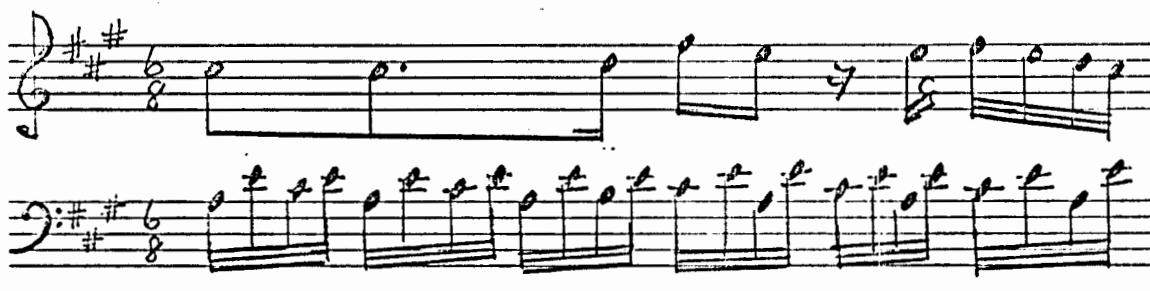
FIGURE 20

VARIATION FOUR OF A MAJOR VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
MOZART

The fifth variation is an Adagio, a rather dreamy interpretation of the theme, lacy, delicate, ornate, and quite Rococo, with profuse use of escape notes and auxiliaries. The bass is of the Alberti type again, acting as an accompaniment for the graceful melodic treatment (Fig. 21). The return to the final A portion constitutes an even more elaborate treatment of the theme, thus a variation of the variation; runs and scale figures fill much of the outline of the original theme.

The final variation, the sixth, is in 4/4, a common conclusion to the classic type of variation which ended in

duple time if the original had been triple, or vice versa. This is the only variation which does not follow the eighteen bar scheme, although the AABA form is preserved. This, it should be mentioned, is the most playful of the variations, with its skips and escapes from the theme (Fig. 22). The second A portion is a cascade of broken chords (Fig. 23), whereas the B is scale-like in movement (Fig. 24); the final A is similar to the opening, but passes into a little codetta which delays the final cadence for eight measures. Although this variation is joyful and full of variety, it can clearly be identified with the theme because of the preservation of the melodic outlines.



change of mode, tempo, and meter, but certainly it is melodic embellishment which reigns supreme here (13:57).

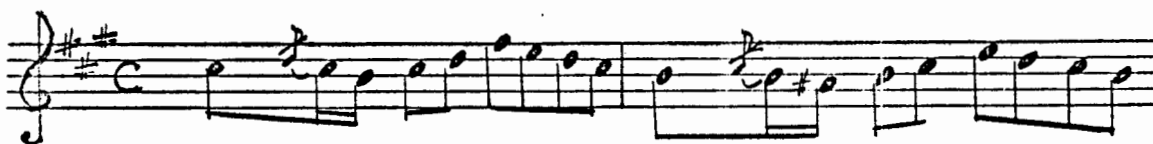


FIGURE 22

VARIATION SIX OF A MAJOR VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
MOZART



FIGURE 23

VARIATION SIX OF A MAJOR VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
MOZART



FIGURE 24

VARIATION SIX OF A MAJOR VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
MOZART

III. BEETHOVEN

Beethoven's use and development of the variation is considered by Murphy to be the apogee in variation technique. Although "...the works of later composers may be more complex in texture...they are hardly more comprehensive in treatment," (13:57)

The variation form interested Beethoven only slightly less than did the sonata-allegro form (17:108). His use of the form was more of the large or characteristic type than of the purely ornamental (13:58), but he combined principles of both the old and new, particularly in his early works, such as the Ab variations, opus 26 (4:682). He expanded and modified the variation technique with key changes, double themes, and creative treatment of his themes, but never did he destroy variations per se. One interesting innovation in the opus 34 set, "Six variations on an original theme," involved a change of key on each succeeding variation, down a third each time, from G to Eb to C and A, etc. He never repeated this innovation (nor did any of his disciples), but its mentioning points out the man's infinite creativity (9:97).

Beethoven wrote twenty independent sets of variations for the piano, most of which used themes borrowed from tunes of contemporary operas (9:486); a few were free-composed. In

all, the variations involve a transformation, rather than a pure imitation and/or alteration of the theme. The transformation might be a rhythmic variation, in which the only connection to the theme is the principle cadential punctuations or a harmonic or melodic "thread" or "germ," continually being developed and presented in different aspects (11:184). But, in any case, Beethoven's variations involve much more than mere melodic decoration, or as Tovey states (19:125):

The listener who wishes to understand Beethoven's variations had better begin at once by relieving his conscience of all responsibility for tracing the melody.

The variations in the Sonata for piano in Ab major, opus 26, are not mature Beethoven; rather, they are transitional, and like the Sonata in G, opus 14, #2, the emphasis is not entirely upon other than decorative variations. Beethoven's use of the variation form as a first movement was not an innovation in a general sense, but it was an innovation for him (3:90). Opus 26 was Beethoven's first nineteenth Century piano sonata; the variations in the first movement are hardly of the fantasia type of his later works, such as the Diabelli set, but certainly

...the pianistic foliage, so to speak, that overgrows this scaffolding has become noticeably richer and juicier than anything we know in eighteenth-century variations (3:90).

These variations are pianistic, a quality attributable to the improved technical resources available to the composer as well as to the changes in the piano's design around the turn of the nineteenth century.

The opening movement of Sonata #12 in Ab major, opus 26, termed *Andante con Variazioni*, consists of a theme and five variations. The theme is built on thirty-two measures, quite neatly divided into four eight measure periods, in an AABA form. The opening two phrases are each an antecedent and consequent, cadencing on the dominant in measure four and on the tonic in eight. The theme begins on Eb, moving up to Ab, and remaining very much around this note (Fig. 25), landing momentarily on a neighboring Eb at the half cadence. The bass movement is smooth with the passing use of V6/4 between I and I6, as well as in the use of the secondary dominants. The use of these chords and the German sixths adds a richness lacking in Mozart's and Handel's variations. The end of the first eight measures is not final, because the approach to V is on an unaccented beat (Fig. 26).

The repeat of the A phrase is very similar, both melodically and harmonically, with a more persistent use of the Ab (Fig. 27) than at the beginning, as well as with a full cadence at the end of the second eight measures, thus bringing the first two A sections to a close.

The B section, in contrast, involves a change to the supertonic, with a sequence following in the tonic, then a third sequence following which combines both (Fig. 28), with the melody and harmony transferred to the octaves in the right hand instead of thirds, and with freer chord jumps, such as substitutes for I, i.e. III and VI and their dominants. The middle B section is terminated by a cadence leading back to I of Ab and a repetition of the second A section.



FIGURE 25

THEME FROM Ab VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
BEETHOVEN

Variation one follows the original theme very closely, but is quite pianistic in spreading the notes over a wider range than in the theme (Fig. 29). This dispersion of the theme, with interpolated notes, gives the A sections of this variation a surging, upward motion, with a subsequent release, or falling movement. The harmony and phrasing are the same as in the theme. The B section has a melody accompanied in thirds like the theme, but with a very active bass part

(Fig. 30) and with octave jumps in the right hand where the theme had only octaves (Fig. 31); it is sequential as in the theme. The return to A is similar to the first A of the variation.



FIGURE 26

THEME FROM Ab VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
BEETHOVEN



FIGURE 27

THEME FROM Ab VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
BEETHOVEN

The second variation incorporates the theme in the bass with syncopated right-hand chords and octaves (Fig. 32). The B section continues this pattern, but the thirds in the right hand of Figs. 28 or 30 have become bass note broken

The third variation marks the middle point of the set, and it appears as if Beethoven goes farther astray from the original theme than in any of the others. Unlike Handel's variations, where the involvement and complexity continue to the finish, Beethoven's variations reach a



FIGURE 29

VARIATION ONE OF Ab VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
BEETHOVEN



FIGURE 30

VARIATION ONE OF Ab VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
BEETHOVEN

climax in the middle of the set and then return closer to the theme in the succeeding variations. The orbit seems elliptical, and this variation is the furthest point before the return to the original.

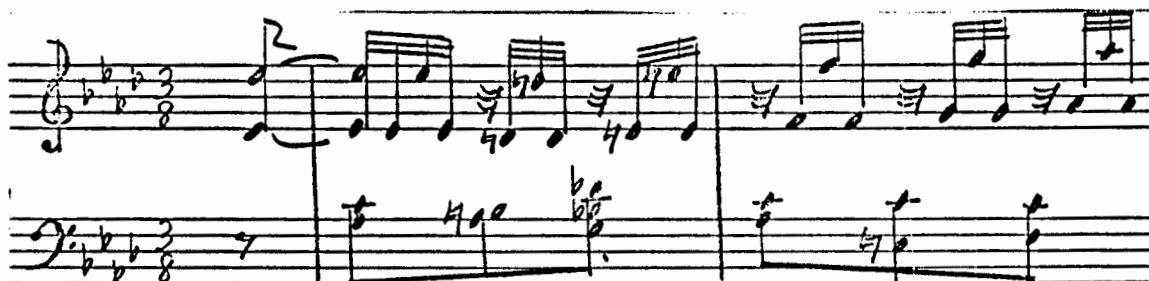


FIGURE 31

VARIATION ONE OF Ab VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
BEETHOVEN



FIGURE 32

VARIATION TWO OF Ab VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
BEETHOVEN

resolving to V, V of V resolving to III, and V of V finally going firmly to V, which then returns to I (Fig. 36). The prevailing rhythm of the B section, as well as of the A sections, is syncopated and always gives the feeling of delayed resolution (Fig. 37). The return to A is similar to the opening of this variation, except the melody is given in octaves.



FIGURE 34

VARIATION THREE OF Ab VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
BEETHOVEN

The fourth variation returns to Ab major in a bouncy display of pianistic technique which spaces the theme over

much of the keyboard. The theme is identified by its characteristic rise of Eb to Ab; it then jumps up an octave to Ab before resolving to G, thus setting a pattern of a rising

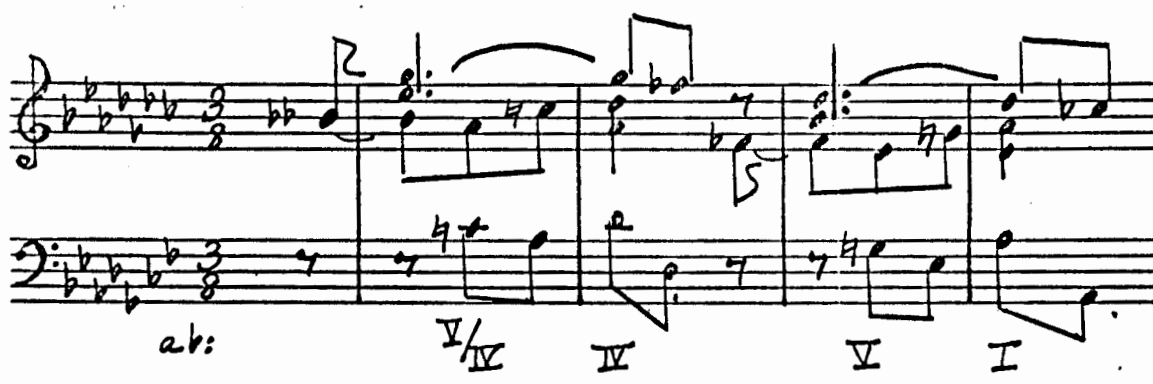


FIGURE 35

VARIATION THREE OF Ab VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
BEETHOVEN



FIGURE 36

VARIATION THREE OF Ab VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
BEETHOVEN

and falling of octave leaps with a delayed resolution in the melody. The bass follows the same plan (Fig. 38), and the harmony is generally the same as in the theme. The repetition of A is similar, with the melody now in octaves; there is a tightening of the accompanying rhythm in the left hand

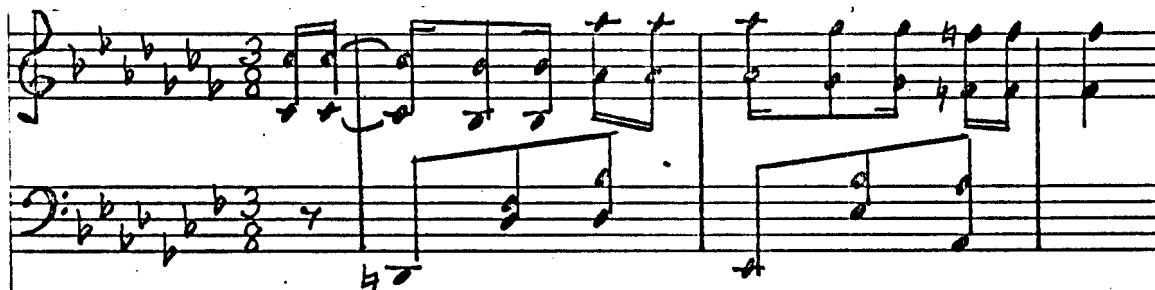


FIGURE 37

VARIATION THREE OF Ab VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
BEETHOVEN

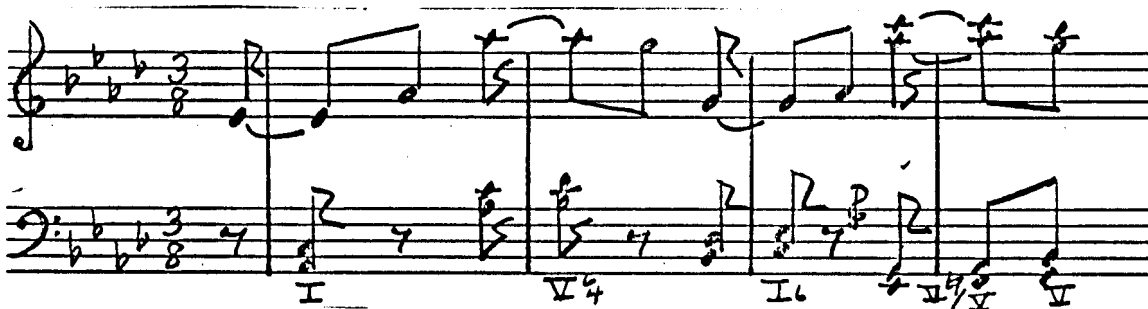


FIGURE 38

VARIATION FOUR OF Ab VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
BEETHOVEN

(Fig. 39). The B section continues the delayed resolution with a harmonic framework which goes farther astray than any other previous B sections. There is use of chords for color and to erase any key feeling (Fig. 40). The supertonic moves to V, which returns to I, then to a VI with a raised third which really acts like a dominant of II; this returns to V at the end of the section. The reiteration of A is similar to Fig. 39.

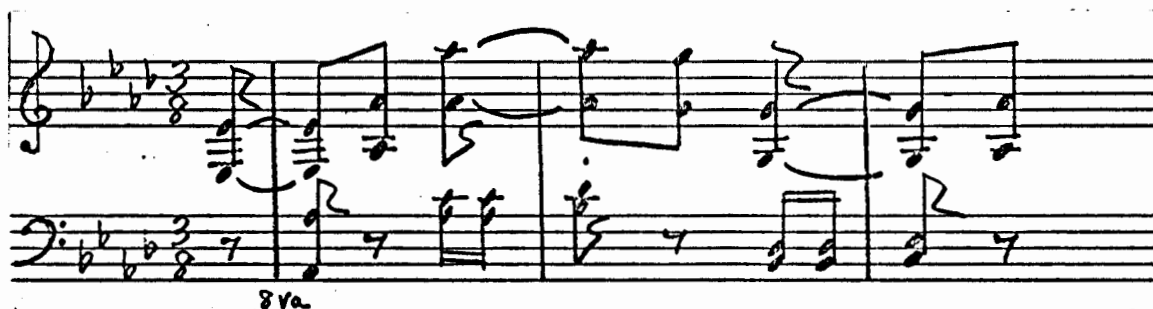


FIGURE 39

VARIATION FOUR OF Ab VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
BEETHOVEN

The final variation returns closer to the theme. As was previously mentioned, unlike the Handelian variations, Beethoven's wander from the theme elliptically and then proceed back. This variation marks the point in which the orbit is closest to the theme. The triplet sixteenth note figure outlines the original theme (noted in arrows, Fig. 41).

The initial harmony is the same as in the theme, I to V6/4 to I6. The repetition of A is accomplished with the tune

Handwritten musical score for Variation Four of Ab Variations by Beethoven. The score is written on four staves (two treble and two bass clefs) in 3/8 time. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The notation includes various chords and melodic lines. Roman numerals are written below the staves to indicate the harmonic structure: Ab: VII, V/II, II, IV, I, VI, V/III, V/II, II, V/V, V.

FIGURE 40

VARIATION FOUR OF Ab VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
BEETHOVEN

somewhat hidden under or between the thirty-second note activity, but it is still closely recognizable as the tune (Fig. 42). The B section disguises the original melody in

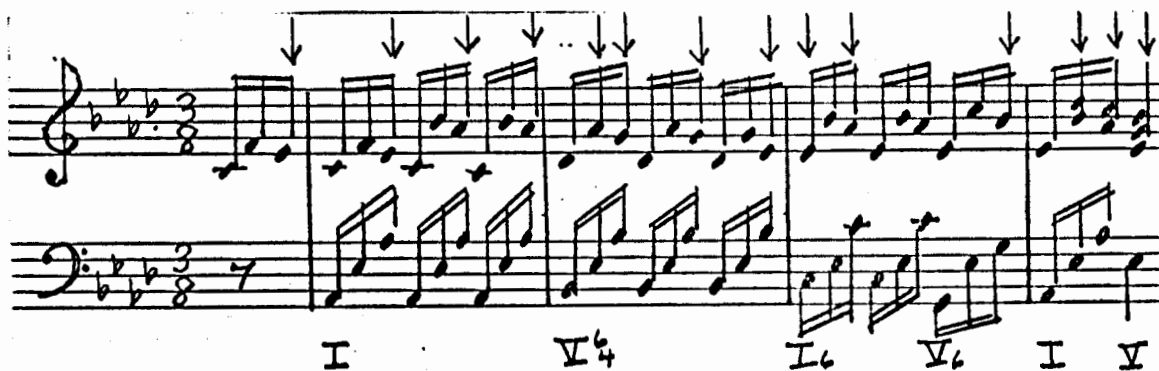


FIGURE 41

VARIATION FIVE OF 32 VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
BEETHOVEN

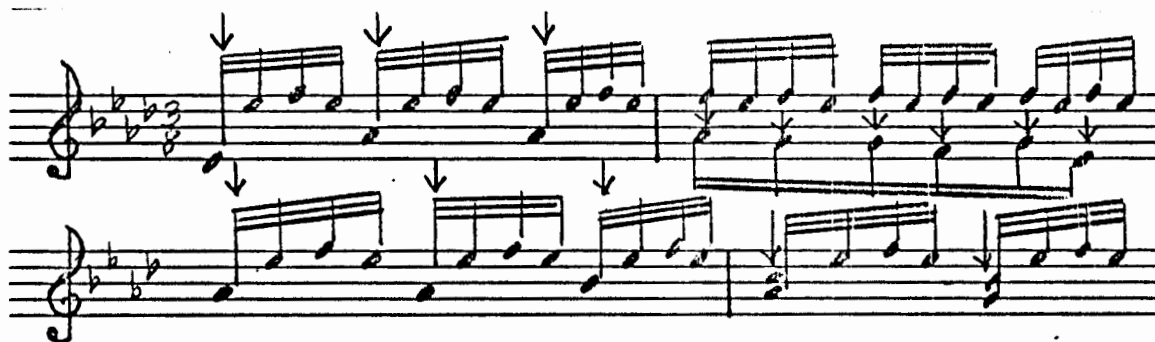


FIGURE 42

VARIATION FIVE OF 32 VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
BEETHOVEN

the left hand while the right hand makes a jump for freedom twice, but falls back each time (Fig. 43). The sequence of V to II to II is preserved; the rest of B is very similar harmonically to the theme.

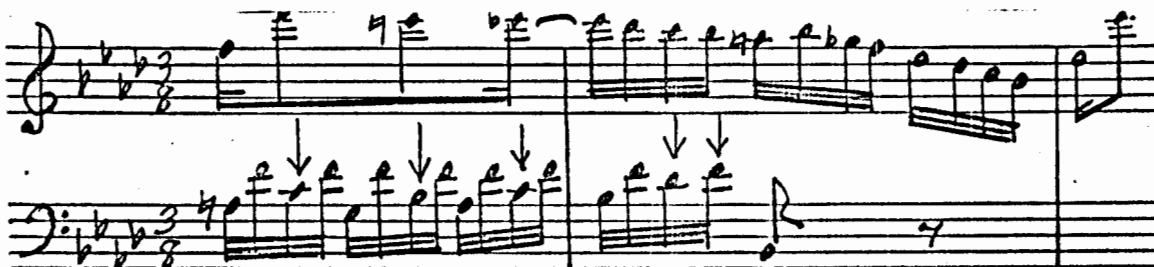


FIGURE 43

VARIATION FIVE OF 32 VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
BEETHOVEN

The return to A, parallel to the other variations, is very similar to the second A phrase, with the melody in an inner voice, accompanied by thirty-second notes.

A coda of fifteen measures concludes this set of variations; it comes as somewhat of a surprise in context of the music, but certainly not as a surprise, historically, because Mozart was fond of concluding a set of variations with a codetta. The melody within the coda is not new; rather, it derives from the melody as is shown in a comparison of the two in Fig. 44. Beethoven immediately decorates this telescoped variation of the theme (Fig. 45), after

which, vacillation between V and I is prolonged eight measures before the set is completed.



FIGURE 44

CODETTA OF VARIATION FIVE OF A_b VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
BEETHOVEN



FIGURE 45

CODETTA OF VARIATION FIVE OF A_b VARIATIONS
EXCERPT
BEETHOVEN

It should be pointed out that opus 26, while showing Beethoven's ingenuity in altering and disguising the theme through means other than pure decoration, is more prophetic than typical of later Beethoven. He reached the highest power with variations in his symphonies. His later variations,

in fact, such as the Diabelli set, became prototypes for the Romantics, such as Schumann's Symphonic Etudes and Brahms' Variations on a Theme of Handel (9:486). Opus 26 shows the tendency to transformation, but hardly escapes the techniques of Mozart; it should best be placed in a transitional classification.

IV. NINETEENTH CENTURY VARIATIONS

Murphy believes that Beethoven was the apex of the variation form, and that everything which came before, led to him, and everything since then has been only an elaboration or extension of his ideas. An earlier quote appropriately should be reiterated here. "The works of later composers may be more complex in texture, but they are hardly more comprehensive in treatment." (13:57) Actually, the Romantics developed the idea of theme and variations very little; all they added was personality and expressive feeling (11:184). Often, the Romantic variations approach more of a fantasia because the variations are frequently not separated, but run together ad infinitum (1:30).

The two types of variations of this century stem from Beethoven: (1) The Franckian type, which transforms the whole, not the individual parts, developed from the Haydn-Beethoven concept of a symphonic treatment of the theme; and (2) the Brahmsian type, transmitted through Schumann,

which stressed the individual variations more than the composition as a whole. Murphy believes (13:57) that Brahms was the last great composer of variations, a lineage which began with Bach. This is hardly true, because Brahms' rhythmic invention is certainly a bridge leading to the twentieth century type.

V. TWENTIETH CENTURY VARIATIONS

It would appear that the technique of twentieth century variation is neither purely that of the ornamental type of Handel and Mozart, nor of the characteristic type of Beethoven. The new type is really a synthesis and may be based upon any one element of music, or a combination, such as melodic inflection, harmonic weight, or rhythmic generation. Eschmann tells of the techniques of twentieth century variation in Changing Forms in Modern Music, mentioning that almost nothing is ruled out as long as some degree of integration is maintained (8:119). An example would be to alter the characteristic melody and harmony of "Dixie," but to maintain the characteristic rhythm, an integration with the original which would be much more recognizable than would rhythmic mutation with retention of the melodic intervals.

The contemporaries become so esoteric in their use of variations that it is often impossible to detect the tune,

or as Bairstow (2:46) so aptly states it: "...the tune... is only the constructional element, like the steel girders in a modern building." More commonly, the rhythm or a rhythmic motive or fragment may be the only element which integrates a variation, and in extreme cases, just the punctuation of the theme is enough to unify a set of variations (8:112). As a commentary, it is interesting to note that:

Modern psychologists state, as a result of experimentation, that the content of a return carries less weight in the verdict than the rhythm of a return.
(8:118)

Some of the notable variations of this century have been Vaughn William's Fantasia on a Theme of Tallis, Dohnanyi's Variations on a Nursery Song, and Rachmaninoff's Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini. Max Reger, an avid exponent of twentieth century variation, often uses a final fugue on a subject derived from the variation theme; Vincent D'Indy (in *Istur*) has made use of variations which begin complicated and progress to those which are more perspicuous, until a unison theme sounds at the end, an unraveling process not unlike the inverted order used by some Baroque composers (10:322).

The resources are so vast, one can hardly generalize. This study will show what one composer has done in a set of variations for piano.

VI. NORMAN DELLO JOIO

The variations by Dello Joio come from his third piano sonata (1948) and constitute the first movement. The theme is a simple tune of four and one-half measures, counterpointed in the second measure (Fig. 46) with intervals which derive from the melody. The keynotes of this tune are a rise from G to D to G above this, and then down.



FIGURE 46

THEME FROM PIANO SONATA #3
EXCERPT
DELLO JOIO

Immediately after the melody is presented, it is stated again, commencing on the third count of the measure instead of the first, with a thicker, spicier accompaniment (Fig. 47). The harmony can be analyzed as I, IV, and V chords with additional tones added triadically on top, such as sevenths, ninths, and elevenths. For example, in Fig. 47, the first chord is really a I missing the root and seventh, but including a ninth and thirteenth; on the second beat of the same

measure, the root and seventh are added, so between the two chords, the ear perceives a chord triadically built through the thirteenth. On the third count, the chord is basically IV, with the fifth missing, but with a major seventh and ninth added. This moves on the fourth count to a passing V6/4 chord, missing the third and fifth, but exhibiting a minor seventh and eleventh. This little progression moves back to I (with a major seventh) on the first beat of the next measure, and so on the progressions go. Of course, these chords may be analyzed differently, and perhaps it is assinine to attempt to analyze them as triads, but they do function as I, IV, and V chords, so the approach is justifiable.

The musical score is written on a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 2/4. The melody in the right hand features eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together. The bass line consists of quarter and eighth notes. Below the staff, the chords for each measure are labeled: G: I, IV Y⁴, IV, V⁴, V., I., IV, Y, VII^b, I, I.

FIGURE 47

THEME FROM PIANO SONATA #3
EXCERPT
DELLO JOIO

After the theme is repeated with chordal accompaniment, the melody in the right hand carries on a small dialogue with the left hand for the remaining measures (Fig. 48).



FIGURE 48

THEME FROM PIANO SONATA #3
EXCERPT
DELLO JOIO

The right hand again emphasizes the intervals between D and G; there are fragments of the melody employed, as can be seen from the similarities of measure two of Fig. 46 and measure two of Fig. 47. The last three measures (Fig. 48) emphasize contrary motion, what with the rising fourths in the right hand and the descent to G in the left. The last two chords hardly establish a V to I cadence, because the final chord is unstable, though colorful, with its added major seventh and ninth. The cadential feeling is achieved more by the descent of the bass notes to a G.

Variation one is characterized by two distinct rhythms, operating concurrently, but often switching hands

or registers. These rhythms, both in 3/8, are:

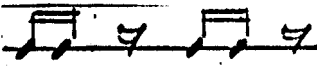
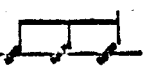
(1) ; and (2) . Placed one against the other, the rhythms result in a sprightly variation which is full of syncopation and which is widely spaced over the entire keyboard (Fig. 49). The intervals of this variation can be seen to derive from intervals of the theme, particularly those involving the G-D-G intervals (Fig. 50).



FIGURE 49

VARIATION ONE OF PIANO SONATA #3
EXCERPT
DELLO JOIO

This variation is neatly punctuated into eight measure units, the first and second groups being practically identical. The fragmentation of the original melody is equally divided between the right and left hands. At the seventeenth measure, a stretto section of four measures begins, which intensifies the rhythm (Fig. 51) and which exhibits the contrary motion of the theme. This is certainly the climax

of the variation, after which is seen a reiteration of the two rhythms, the marcato bass deriving from intervals of the third measure of Fig. 48 (Fig. 52), only with wider spacing this time. The variation ends on a G major chord, approached by a Neapolitan 6th (Fig. 53).

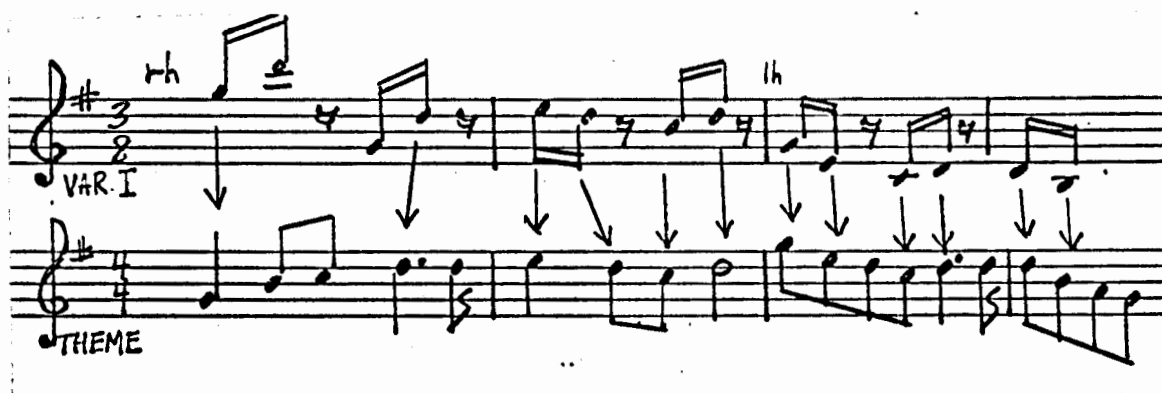


FIGURE 50

COMPARISON OF THEME AND VARIATION ONE
OF PIANO SONATA #3
DELLO JOIO

Variation two begins in 6/8 rhythm, with some mildly dissonant chords setting the mood, first a G major, then a combination of G, F#, and Eb, a chord with G, D, and F, and finally a G, F#, and D# combination. This creates an ostinato (which is transposed to create a sequence) before the melody enters. When the melody enters in the third measure (Fig. 54) in the left hand, it follows the same melodic intervals of the theme, but reaches up to a G in the fourth measure, where an E-natural is expected, and then falls down

to an unexpected Eb and rests on D; the next two measures follow the theme. In fact, the similarity can be seen in

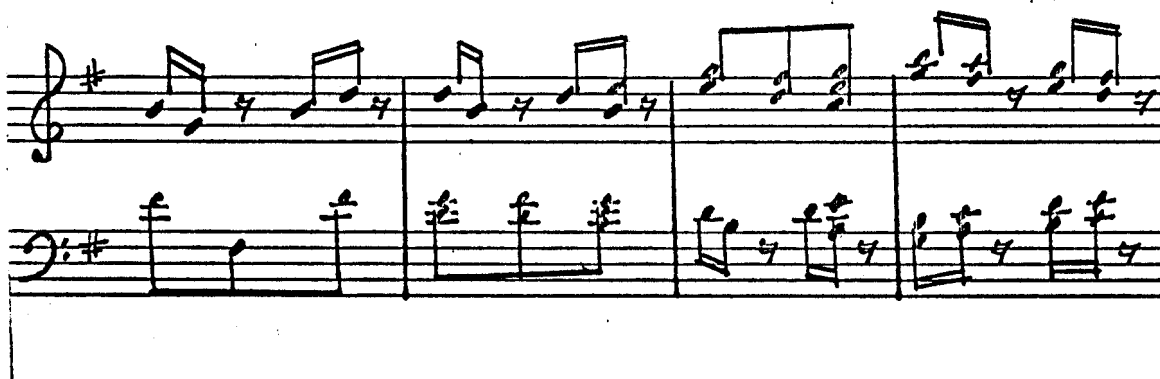


FIGURE 51

VARIATION ONE OF PIANO SONATA #3
EXCERPT
DELLO JOIO

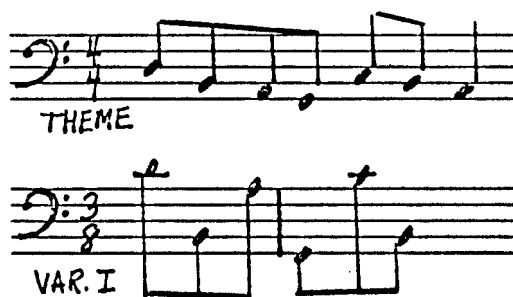


FIGURE 52

COMPARISON OF THEME AND VARIATION ONE
OF PIANO SONATA #3
DELLO JOIO

Fig. 55. The next four measures duplicate the four shown in Fig. 54. The following eight measures carry on a dialogue similar to that in the theme (Fig. 48). The right

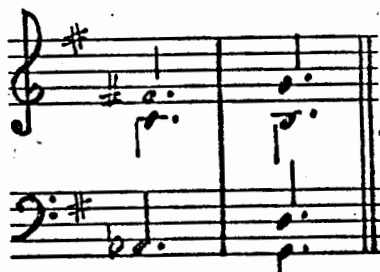


FIGURE 53

VARIATION ONE OF PIANO SONATA #3
EXCERPT
DELLO JOIO



FIGURE 54

VARIATION TWO OF PIANO SONATA #3
EXCERPT
DELLO JOIO

hand is adopted from the corresponding phrase of the theme (Fig. 56); Dello Joio's ability at rhythmic alteration is shown if Fig. 57 is compared with the second measure of

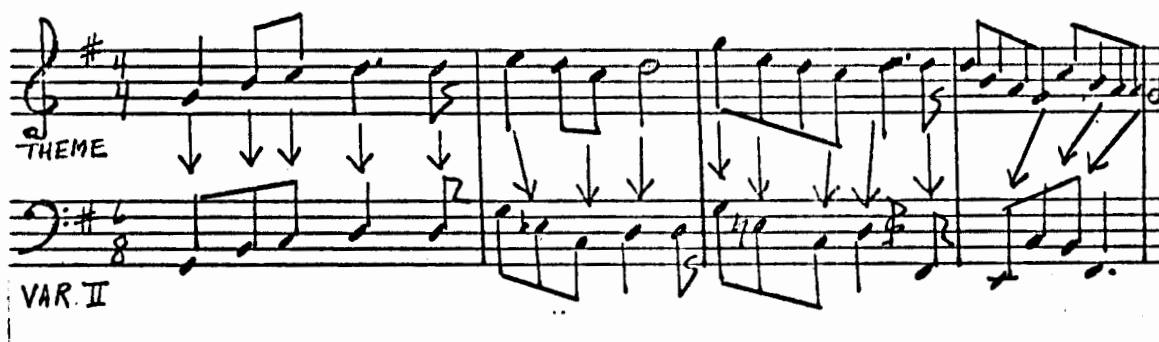


FIGURE 55

COMPARISON OF THEME AND VARIATION TWO
OF PIANO SONATA #3
DELLO JOIO

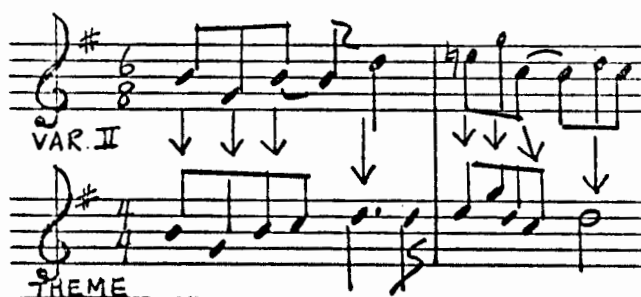


FIGURE 56

COMPARISON OF THEME AND VARIATION TWO
OF PIANO SONATA #3
DELLO JOIO

Fig. 48. Particularly pronounced is the use of the descending C-A-E-C in both examples. The variation closes on a G major chord.



FIGURE 57

VARIATION TWO OF PIANO SONATA #3
EXCERPT
DELLO JOIO

Variation three, consisting of double octaves, is certainly the most pianistic and dazzling of this set. The primary interest is the imitation between the right and left hands (Fig. 58) which utilizes the same motifs shown in this example. The placement over the keyboard is wide, and sometimes the left hand sets the pattern for imitation; generally, this variation carries its rhythmic vitality throughout.

Variation four returns to a more solemn mood. Dello Joio has set his theme, followed it by a lively variation, a slow one, another fast one, and now another slow. An ostinato is established (Fig. 59) before the melody appears in this variation, very similar to the use made in Variation

two. This appears for much of the variation, either as an ostinato or a sequence, sometimes in an upper register, sometimes in a lower. The melody is a retrograde version of the original theme, with an ostinato above it, and a G to D reiteration, or pedal, below, although this certainly is not a strict retrograde. The derivation of the retrograde



FIGURE 58

VARIATION THREE OF PIANO SONATA #3
EXCERPT
DELLO JOIO



FIGURE 59

VARIATION FOUR OF PIANO SONATA #3
EXCERPT
DELLO JOIO

is shown in Fig. 60. There is a repeat of this before the dialogue between the right and left hands which has occurred in other variations. The right hand has an improvisatory

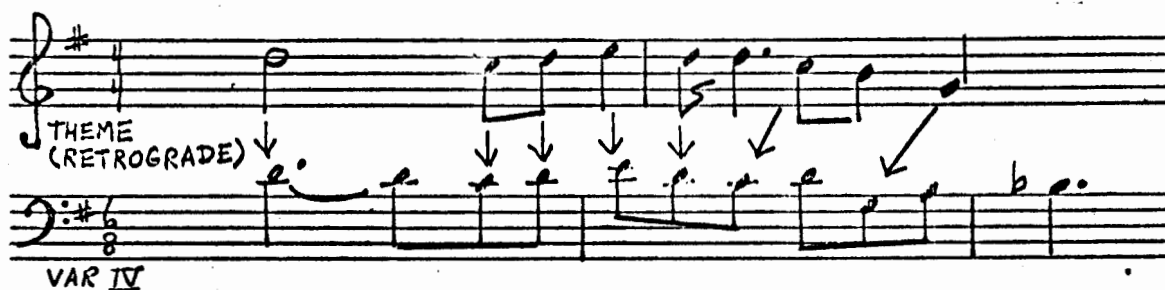


FIGURE 60

COMPARISON OF THEME AND VARIATION FOUR
OF PIANO SONATA #3
DELIO JOIO

quality, while the bass chords of fourths or triads (with major sevenths) add a mildly dissonant accompaniment (Fig. 61). Later, a transposed retrograde of the melody occurs in the left hand, beginning on Bb instead of the D shown in Fig. 55. Besides the retrograde version, however fragmentary, of the tune to relate this variation to the original, another quality has been the reiteration of G-D, a drone-like device. The return of the retrograde on Bb (Fig. 62) would seem to indicate that the tonal center has shifted to Eb. This is confirmed by the closing of the variation on an Eb minor triad, changing to Eb major in the final measure (Fig. 63).

The final variation marks an extreme departure from the theme; the points of integration seem only to be the G to D relationship (drone) and various fragments of the melody. Chords of the fourth precede the actual melody, if it can be called such, in an ostinato type and before the G to D relationship is formed. The melodic fragmentation

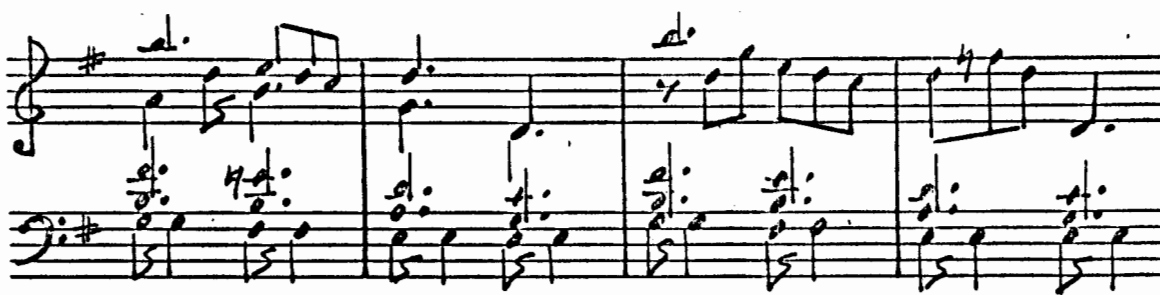


FIGURE 61

VARIATION FOUR OF PIANO SONATA #3
EXCERPT
DELLO JOIO



FIGURE 62

VARIATION FOUR OF PIANO SONATA #3
EXCERPT
DELLO JOIO

which appears in measure three of Fig. 64 derives from the first three notes of the theme backwards, G-B-C transposed to Bb-Ab-F. The following fragments follow a similar rhythmic pattern, accompanied by lush half note chords in the lower regions of the keyboard; the spacing is wide. Consistently, the interval between G and D, as seen in the third measure of example 64 is emphasized. This open fifth, sometimes a Db to Gb, sometimes B to E, serves to unify this variation with the others. There are reminders of the theme, which can be seen in an example of this variation in Fig. 65, which is really the spirit of the theme shown in Fig. 48. The variation ends in a little melodic fragment with a chord spelling D, E, A, C, Ab. The final four measures after the variation closes serve as a codetta to

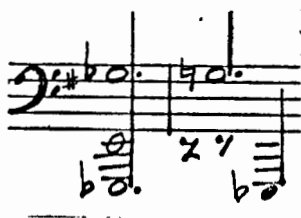


FIGURE 63

VARIATION FOUR OF PIANO SONATA #3
EXCERPT
DELLO JOIO

the set, and they are exactly the same as Fig. 48 from the theme, except the final chord is a simple G major this time, thus giving a feeling of completion and resolution to the set.

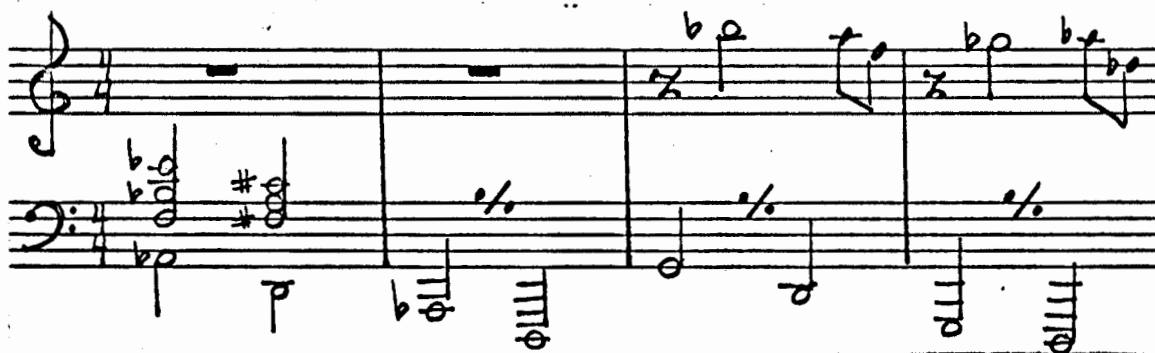


FIGURE 64

VARIATION FIVE OF PIANO SONATA #3
EXCERPT
DELLO JOIO



FIGURE 65

VARIATION FIVE OF PIANO SONATA #3
EXCERPT
DELLO JOIO

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Devices of variation in choral music date from the chants of the Middle Ages, but instrumental variations probably date from sixteenth century Spain, notably under the auspices of the composer Cabezón. The early use of the technique was mainly decorative in the instrumental accompaniments for songs, but the type evolved into idiomatic variations for keyboard under the aegis of the early 17th Century English virginalists, such as Byrd and others listed in the Fitzwilliam collection. Variations, during the Baroque period, were called "airs with doubles," although there were types which emphasized the bass, such as the chaconne and passacaglia. Handel, exemplifying the late Baroque, wrote airs and doubles in which each succeeding variation increased the note value activity; the type involved paired variations too. Mozart, representing a later period, followed a scheme in many of his variations which involved melodic decoration in the early variations, followed by those which included changes of mode, tempo, and meter. Beethoven, in his early works, followed the Mozartian scheme, but intensified the use of characteristic

alterations in his variations through startling changes of registers, dynamics, textures, and harmonies, as well as either disguising the melody in the inner voices or completely changing it. The Romantics added little to Beethoven's ideas, but the twentieth century composers have used any device for variation, largely disregarding integration to the theme through melodic and harmonic elements in favor of the rhythmic components, however fragmentary. Often, the variations are too abstruse to be related to the theme; sometimes, the composer is the only one who truly knows the point of integration.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusions above are based on what established authorities on musical form believe as well as what the analysis of the works in this study have revealed. This study, however, is only a cursory view of what can be done with the analysis of theme and variations, both structurally and historically. The paucity of books and theses in this field would seem to indicate the form has been somewhat ignored. Although this study hardly allows for generalization beyond the works analyzed, similar studies would certainly confirm or refute the ideas suggested by theorists such as Leichtentritt, Macpherson, and Tovey. The examination of other works of more composers in the same periods

would also show the line of departure some composers have chosen.

In addition, this study has specifically suggested the following questions:

(1) Is the variation technique exhausted? The trend has been from melodic and harmonic variations, through characteristic types, to the twentieth century type of free-development. Is there any element of music left for variation, or is the form exhausted and dated? Is it a period form such as the sonata-allegro form? Does improvisation in American jazz, with its concomitant interest in Baroque improvisation, indicate a revival of the form?

(2) At what point does one's ear fail to perceive something as a variation of a musical theme? Does the form necessitate an obvious variation or more obscure ones? Should a point of integration with the theme be recognizable aurally, or should the variation remain an enigma? Which type is more satisfying esthetically?

(3) Can the form be congruous with electronic music and twelve-tone technique which negate the principle of repetition and attempt to obviate any semblance of a return?

The following historical points could and should warrant closer scrutiny:

(4) Where did Mozart's scheme for variations derive? Was it his idea, a plagiarized form, or a culmination of the

work of many?

(5) What is the parallel development of the sonata-allegro form and the theme and variations form?

(6) What has been Beethoven's use of the form in the three established periods of writing within his life? What was his turning point from the ornamental to characteristic variations?

(7) What are the precise links of the Romantic schools of variation to Beethoven? What is the link between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries?

(8) Finally, what have the most profound contemporaries, Stravinsky, Hindemith, and Bartok, thought of and done with the form?

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